

Arizona America250 Commission

Virtually via Zoom

Meeting Minutes of June 1, 2026

1. Call to Order and roll call

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Chair Fontes

Commission Members Present:

Honorable Adrian Fontes, Chair
Anna Needham
Representative Justin Wilmeth

Neil Giuliano
Ashley Harder

Sarah Webber
Marcus Carney

Commission Members Absent:

Chairman Verlon Jose, Vice-Chair
Senator Vince Leach

Paul Tighe
Jay McCall

2. Discussion and possible action on meeting minutes for May 4, 2026.

Neil Giuliano motioned to approve the May 4, 2026, minutes. Sarah Webber seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion and possible action on 4th of July activations.

a. Light Up the Sky at Phoenix Raceway.

Executive Director Terech shared that Commissioners have been invited to Light Up the Sky with the City of Avondale at the Phoenix Raceway for the 4th of July.

[Light Up the Sky Celebration | City of Avondale](#)

b. America's Potluck/America Gives Week of Service, July 5th through July 11th

The Commission received an update on America's Potluck Week of Service with Arizona America250, scheduled for July 5–11. An upcoming email will provide participation details, including options such as volunteering with food banks, hosting workplace potlucks, organizing food drives, planning meal-packing or community meals, and creating "250 Challenges" (e.g., 250 meals, cans, volunteer hours, or dollars). Planned activities include dedicated Arizona America250 volunteer shifts at

St. Mary's Food Bank in Phoenix, a St. Vincent de Paul event with BlueCross BlueShield of Arizona, and a JustServe-supported volunteer event at Midwest Food Bank in Gilbert, with registration links to be shared via the forthcoming email communication.

4. PR & Media update from Agital/Go Fish Digital.

A representative from Go Fish Digital shared information about the upcoming Cheers250 on June 6th, with participating Passport250 sites statewide including Barrio Brewing Co., Bullhead Belle, Cider Corps, Lute's Casino, Mother Road Brewing Company, Prison Hill Brewing, and Sonoita Elgin Vineyards. Locations will offer exclusive food and drink specials. Commissioners were invited to help promote Cheers250 by filming a short video. Go Fish provided information about upcoming media spots, social media calendars, and sponsor and partner outreach.

5. Discussion, update, and possible action on bell rededication ceremony with sponsor and volunteer recognition

Chair Fontes provided an update on plans for the bell rededication and volunteer recognition ceremony, to be held on October 1, 2026. He noted that Hualapai wood will be used to create custom Arizona America250 pens for volunteers and others being recognized.

Executive Director Terech reported that the Commission has raised a total of approximately 1.449 million, with current expenditures of about 1.375 million, leaving available funds of about 73,951.87 (exclusive of future revenue) and reflecting earmarks of 2,500 for volunteer recognition and 5,000 for sponsor recognition. Commissioner Giuliano suggested that donors and sponsors be recognized with custom framed items, with additional details to follow.

Staff and commissioners reviewed projected costs for the bell rededication and volunteer recognition event, including an estimated 17,500 for the bell rededication and volunteer recognition (custom pens), 5,000 for sponsor recognition, equipment rentals totaling approximately 9,015.18, and an additional 5,000 for catering, for an overall projected event cost of approximately 22,500. Future one-time expenses discussed included municipal activations, "Dear America, Love Arizona" postcard reorders, a public grant, Historic Preservation Youth Council support, and potential travel stipends for the Executive Director to attend a conference.

Chair Fontes entertained a motion to authorize the Executive Director to expend up to 22,500 for the bell rededication and volunteer recognition ceremony consistent with the

outlined budget. Representative Wilmeth so moved, Commissioner Giuliano seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

6. Commissioner updates and possible action on subcommittee work

a. Arts, Museums & Cultural Institutions

Commissioner Needham reported that the subcommittee is exploring public art opportunities following the July 4 activations and is identifying additional storytelling opportunities connected to Stores250, Passport250, and other arts and cultural locations.

b. Civic Engagement, Education & Community Service

Executive Director Terech reported that state flags flown at the Capitol will be presented to scholarship winners as part of ongoing civic engagement and education activities.

c. Fundraising

Commissioner Giuliano reported that there was no formal fundraising update but noted that an ask is pending to help cover the costs associated with the October 1 event, with more information to be provided at a future meeting.

d. History, Heritage & Historic Preservation

Commissioner Harder reported that the subcommittee remains very active and continues to promote Commission initiatives within their respective communities. Subcommittee member Kathryn Leonard shared that the Historic Preservation Youth Council participated in the Governor's Heritage Preservation Honor Awards at the Mesa museum, where two youth who originally proposed the council were honored; the subcommittee is working through logistical issues to ensure the youth council is structured for long-term sustainability as a legacy initiative.

e. Military & Veterans Affairs

Executive Director Terech reported, in coordination with Commissioner Webber, that "Operation Freedom March" with Arizona State Parks has been added as part of the Outdoors250 initiative.

f. Municipal Outreach & Tribal Affairs

Executive Director Terech reported that municipal and tribal outreach continues; there was no separate subcommittee report.

g. Travel & Tourism

Commissioner Webber reported that Outdoors250 has over 820 sign-ups to date and that Fish250 is now officially launched. She also shared the link promoted by Arizona Game and Fish for Fish250.

7. Report from Executive Director

a. National initiatives

Executive Director Terech reported that an Arizona State University student won a national “America’s Startup” competition, which she described as similar to “Shark Tank,” and that a joint social media post is forthcoming with Arizona State University. She also noted that the Arizona Office of Tourism will participate in the Great American State Fair, which will feature Arizona America250 initiatives such as the Dear America, Love Arizona postcards, and the Arizona panels from the Traveling Museum.

b. Arizona initiatives

Executive Director Terech reported that new State Forty Eight shirts will be available beginning June 11. She also noted that a Cheers250 activation is scheduled for Saturday, June 6, at 2:50 p.m.

8. Discussion and possible action on future meetings

Chair Fontes proposed the following meeting schedule: a mid-July 2026 meeting; no meeting in August; meetings in September and mid-November; and a final meeting in February 2027 focused on any remaining funds and winding down the Commission’s work. He also requested a final Executive Director’s report to be presented in February 2027.

Chair Fontes asked if there were any objections to the proposed schedule; no objections were raised, and staff was directed to schedule meetings consistent with this timeline.

9. Call to the Public

No members of the public offered comments.

10. Adjournment

Chair Fontes adjourned the meeting at 9:52 a.m.